THE BISHOP AND THE BABY.

By WINIFRED M. KIRKLAND.

Heaven had made him a most companionable baby. From the first he had possessed an unusual evenness of health and disposition. No matter how bitter the drafts roared through the little rectory, Master Baby never caught cold. Whooping-cough and measles, scarlet fever, even might sweep the village; baby smiled on unscathed.

Baby's character, also, was one of indomitable cheerfulness. In a little parish in northern New York there may be other anxieties than the high price of coal and beefsteak; but vestries, choirs and diocesan appropriations fretted baby no more than did the coming of a lower tooth. He gurgled and crowed and "patty-caked," and found life at one year old a delightful thing. It was well for the minister's girl-wife that he did.

A warm-hearted Kentuckian, Doris found other things than the weather cold in this Northern village. Two years before she had come here with her husband, fifteen years her senior, with such high thoughts of being helpful to his people. But the people were so difficult for her to understand. these farmers who toiled so hard, these women who lived in their kitchens, and who obviously did not wish her to drop in on them in the mornings. Only three or four times in two years had Doris been invited out to a meal. Much oftener than that had she entertained the parishioners at little suppers, where they sat silent and critical, and would not touch her Maryland biscuit. Somehow the thought of the Maryland biscuit rankled. Two years of disappointment they had been for Doris, her girlish impulsiveness growing slowly chilled.

Yet Doris was plucky. To the minister, serious, dull, utterly unselfish, she seemed the blithest little wife in the world. It was only to the baby she talked, and that only because he could not understand.

They were sitting, mother and baby, by the uncurtained front window, looking down the snowy village street. They were dressed for company, Both dresses had come out of the last missionary box. Doris wore a heavy black silk, which had evidently belonged, in its previous existence, to some stout matron, for all Doris's skill could not alter it to a semblance of her slender figure; the gown still bulged and billowed hopelessly. Baby had the opposite trouble with his frock. Doris could not resist the dainty embroidery, and she had somehow squeezed the fat little body into the sheer muslin, and baby had gurgled so uproariously at the process that he had burst out two buttonholes at once.

It still lacked half an hour of traintime. Doris was talking to the baby. Her voice was rich and sweet, full of rising inflections and slurred consonants not expressible by print.

"Do you-all know why you're so dressed up, son? The bishop is coming to see you. He only comes once in two years, you know, and you'll be a big boy when he comes again. He's a very great man, baby. He writes books, and we sing his hymnus in church. He's known all over the world. He's been entertained by Queen Victoria, and now he's going to be entertained by us! O baby, I'm so afraid of him I'd like to run down cellar and hide! Mother's a naughty girl, baby; seems like she don't feel much like having company, anyway."

Doris rocked silently, gazing down the wintry street, looking south, toward Kentucky. "The bishop is right old, I reckon. I wonder if he looks like grandpa, baby. Baby, say grandpa. Say it!"

"Ga-ga-ga-ga!" replied the dutiful son.

"O baby, I wish grandpa could see you. I wish I could take you to him. I want him to see you now. But we'll never have money enough, never. It would take fifty dollars; it 's so far away. It's spring there; they're planting now. Oh, if I could only see our place and all our folks, and pa, seems like I could come back and not be blue!" There came a gust of tears, quickly mopped away on baby's petticoats. "I mustn't get my eyes red, with company coming."

The train wheezed and trembled, tugging along the up grade of the branch road. For thirty miles it appeared to stop at every cross-road, to stop long enough, too, for the trainmen to get off and clap their arms to their bodies for warmth, and bellow out to the station hangers-on above the rattle of the milk-cans.

There was only half a car for passengers; the other half was for baggage. The passenger section was cold. The car seats were springless, and jolted unmercifully. The bishop knew he should be stiff on the morrow, and even now a draft from the rattling window started a twinge in his right shoulder.

He was shivering as he held out his hand to the little girl whose face had appeared over the back of the seat in front, staring stolidly at him. He won her smile at last, but when he asked her to come and sit with him she tumbled down sheepishly into her place, and would have nothing more to do with him. He wished she had come, for he was lonely. He wondered if he had put everything into his bag. He missed his own little girl so much when it came to packing! She had always taken care of that, and of his letters and his vestments and his pudse and his engagements, of everything. He should never get used to doing without her. Five years since she had gone, and he seemed only to miss her more.

The train was stopping again. On the platform just outside the bishop's window stood a rugged old man, muffled up to the ears, peering into the car. The stolid little girl in the seat in front jumped up, shouting, "Grandpa, grandpa, grandpa!" The bishop tried to wave her a good-by, but she did not see him; she was buried in the little old man's embrace.

There had been a time when the bishop had thought a child's voice would some day call him "grandpa," but the little lips had been cold before he could kiss them. Sometimes, as he traveled, the bishop would fancy that all on the car were going toward their own kin, going to be welcomed by children, parents, sisters, brothers —all but him. Every day for him there was the shaking of strange hands, the speaking to strange faces.

The bishop heard his station called, and rose stiffly.

"I miss the little girl today," he said to himself. "I'm afraid I'm a little tired for visiting."

The brakeman sprang to carry the bishop's bag. People always helped the bishop. Every stranger was his friend. Perhaps it was because of the infirm stoop of the shoulders under the old cape overcoat; perhaps it was his sweet, absent-minded eyes; perhaps it was his smile, the smile of a little child on the lips of an old man.

The rector had gone to a funeral off on the bleak hills, and so old Daniel Springer met the bishop at the train, and escorted him to the rectory, shuffling away at the door, however, not accepting Doris's invitation to enter.

He left the bishop staring in surprise. From the gray outside world the door had opened on a picture that caused him, poet and artist as he was, a keen delight. This was hardly the minister's wife he had expected, this girl with the rosy baby on her arm—a slender girl in black, a knot of old lace at her throat, with rich, dark color, great brown eyes, brown braids piled high on her head, vivid, parted lips, which showed still an expression wistful and appealing. Just so the little girl's lips had looked when he had come back to her after long absence.

A rich Southern voice was bidding him welcome. All Doris's shyness was gone. She led the bishop to the roaring wood stove in the little room that in the winter was dining-room and parlor both in one. The baby was tumbled on the floor. Doris was helping the bishop off with his overcoat, pushing a footstool to his feet. The kettle could be heard singing in the kitchen. In an instant a cup of steaming tea was ready. This drunk, the baby would no longer be disregarded.

The bishop lifted him to his knee. They danced and trotted and "patty-caked" and went to Banbury Cross. Then the baby settled to a long and silent scrutiny of the bishop's watch, only now and then lifting his head for a smile of sympathetic understanding from the bishop. It was all very comfortable. Doris drew her little low rocker up to the bishop's knee and began to darn a little sock.

"Ga-ga-ga-ga!" gurgled the baby.

"He is saying grandpa," said Doris. And then she never knew how it happened that she told it all to the bishop, all that she had previously told only to the baby. Afterward she was surprised at herself, but the bishop had long ceased to be surprised that people should tell him many things on brief acquaintance. He thought it one of the beautiful compensations sent him for his loneliness.

"I'm the youngest," Doris told him. "I'm twenty-two. Mother died when I was little, and I was the last one left home with pa."

The bishop knew the names of all the sisters and brothers, of all the darkies on the place, too,—even of all the horses,—and understood all the free, happy-go-lucky life.

"People are so different up here!" Doris was saying.

Then the bishop spoke for a little while. He told her how well he had known the South in his youth, but how well he had come to know these people of the North, too, in going about among them for forty years. They were stern, he admitted, slow to accept strangers; but their hears once found, were stanch and tender in beautiful, surprising ways.

"And you will surely find their hearts some day," he said. "And once found, you'll never lose them or forget."

Doris, listening, tried to believe and understand and gather courage. But the bishop, while he talked, was thinking of the harshness of her transplanting, and of "pa" sitting on the piazza sweet with honeysuckle, looking north, another old man longing for his little girl.

Now it was time for lamp-lighting and supper-getting, and presently the minister came in from his drive over the hills, a little man lost in his great ulster.

The supper was a merry little meal. Not even when he was entertained by Queen Victoria had the bishop been more delightful. He made the weary little minister laugh like a boy, and the baby pounded the table with his teaspoon in his appreciation of the fun. The bishop's eyes twinkled a little as Doris passed him the bread, for she asked, "Do you-all like Maryland biscuit, sir? I didn't dare to have any, because people up here don't like it. Even Herbert doesn't like it."

"It's delicious, said the bishop. "And I haven't had any for five years."

"We'll have some for breakfast," said Doris, beaming.

After supper they left the bishop and the baby to sit cozily by the fire. The rector had to excuse himself to wipe the dishes for Doris. The baby drowsed against the bishop's shoulder, and the bishop smiled to himself a little as, through the open door, he watched the certor's laborious polishing of every plate.

The evening confirmation service followed close on the dish-washing. The bishop and the rector left Doris to follow with the baby, for of course the baby went to church. Doris had answered the bishop's inquiry in surprise at his surprise. She could not go herself unless baby went. She always bundled him up well, and he usually went to sleep and was very good.

The frame church was crowded to overflowing. People came from everywhere to hear the bishop, and yet old Daniel Springer's criticism of his preaching was perhaps true: "I can't remember what he says. All I know is, after he's through, I feel like shaking hands with every man, woman, and child in church."

To-night the bishop found that he had hard work to keep from preaching to only one person, the girl who sat in the front pew at his right, and held a gray woolen bundle pressed against her heart, and had great brown eyes and a mouth wistful with homesickness.

After service Doris saw the people acting as she had never seen them act after church. No slinking out of their pews with looks neither to right or left, but a moving about among themselves with handshaking and a how-do-you-do for every one. Handshaking for Doris, too, in abundance; she grew radiant with the warmth of it.

As soon as the bishop came out of the vestry, how they surged to speak to him, and how warmly he spoke to them, remembering all, inquiring for all news of these two years. The people, for their part, did not need to ask the bishop about himself: in those two years he had aged so much. Some of them turned away with quick tears.

Doris waited for the bishop until all the congregation had left the church. They had brought a lantern on account of the bishop's failing sight, although the stars and snow made the night luminous.

The bishop went up to his room early, but not to go to bed. He had just seated himself to read when there came a tapping at his door. There stood Doris, hooded and cloaked, a strange, glad excitement in her face.

"They've sent for me!" she exclaimed. "Duncan Speers is suddenly much worse, and his wife is all alone with him and the children, and they've sent for Herbert, and sent for me! They never sent for me before. But," she hesitated, "I don't know how long we shall be gone, and there's the baby's milk—could you—" She stopped.

"Of course I could," said the bishop. "But how do you do it?"

"Come in our room; I'll show you. Here's the oil-stove. You light it here, and the milk is all ready in this pan. You pour it through this funnel into the bottle. He usually wakes up about half-past one, and all he wants is his milk. He'll go right to sleep again. Will it be very much trouble for you? I thought you'd know how much I want to go to them."

"It will be fun!" declared the bishop, radiant and boyish. "Is he all right now?" peering into the crib.

"Oh, yes. You-all can go to bed if you'll leave the doors open. You'll hear him when he wakes up."

The bishop did go to bed, but not to sleep. He was much too happy for that. Twice he stole in to find baby still slumbering soundly. When one o'clock came the bishop got up, put on his dressing-gown, and sat holding his watch, listening. At baby's first whimper he was at the side of the crib. Baby blinked up at him, then laughed and crowed, "Ga-ga-ga-ga!"

"Yes, little boy," said the bishop. "Yes, grandpa's here. He's going to get baby's milk ready. You light the oil-stove this way, and the milk is ready here in this pan. It will be hot presently. Then grandpa must taste it to see if it's all right." The baby was watching the process through the bars of the crib. "Then you pour it into the bottle through this funnel, and pop on this little rubber thing-um-bob, and here we are."

The bishop laid the bottle on the table and arranged a rocking-chair carefully beside it; then he went to the crib. "Come to grandpa, little boy," he said, lifting up baby and wrapping the blanket about him. He seated himself in the rocking-chair and held the bottle to the baby's eager lips. The bishop's heart was full of a great contentment. He bowed his lips to the baby's head. How soft and warm and helpless the little body felt! In that hour the baby belonged to him, for there was no one else in all the house to take care of him but the bishop.

"He'll go right to sleep again," Doris had said; but it would surely be better to hold him just a little while. The little while lengthened to an hour. In the silent house there was no sound but the crackling now and then of the wood stoves, banked for the night, and the soft sound of the bishop's rocker.

One after another, in the village gardens, the roosters began to crow in the morning. The baby had long been sound asleep, but he might wake if he laid him down; besides, it was all too sweet for the bishop to leave off yet.

Doris was aghast when she came in upon him, tired and happy, the baby sleeping in his arms.

"But he's been asleep a long time!" cried Doris. "You might have put him down."

"I didn't want to put him down," answered the bishop.

The bishop was roused from his morning nap by a great pounding. What was it, that regular thump, thump, falling on some soft substance. Oh, yes, he remembered, with a smile, that was Maryland biscuit. He found Doris setting the breakfast table. She was a little dark about the eyes, but radiantly happy.

"You were right, bishop," she told him, "about the people up here. I don't guess I've understood before. Duncan Speers was easier when we left, and Mrs. Speers kissed me when I came away."

There was an appetizing smell of crisping bacon. "Do you-all like your eggs turned, sir?" asked Doris, from the kitchen.

"Yes, and the yellow done hard, please;" called back the bishop, who was dancing the laughing baby on his knee in the morning sunshine.

Breakfast was another cheery meal. Such Maryland biscuit as they were, so golden and rounded on the outside, so fine-grained within! The bishop ate four, and Doris glowed with delight.

"I wish on didn't have to go this morning, bishop," said the rector.

"And so do I," said Doris.

"And so do I," said the bishop.

"And so does the baby," said his mother.

But the leave-taking had to come. The rector, in his long ulster and cap pulled over his ears, stood in the hall, holding the bishop's bag. The bishop lingered to bid good-by to Doris and to the baby in her arms.

"Before I say good-bye," the bishop was saying, "I want to ask you a great favor. I want you to take this. The baby will take it, perhaps, because we played grandpa last night." He pressed a tiny green roll into the baby's fist.

"I want you and the baby to go to see that other grandpa," he continued. "Don't say no until I've made you understand a little. I had a daughter—and she died, she and the little one together." For a moment the bishop's lips showed a pitiful, palsied trembling, that brought the tears to Doris's eyes. "For my little girl's sake, will you take this and go to Kentucky?"

"Yes," whispered Doris. The tears were running down her cheeks. She tried to say thank you. Then she just said, holding out her hand in good-by:

"I was tired when you came. I feel rested now."

The bishop was kissing the baby good-by. "I think I feel rested, too," he said.—Youth's Companion.

Secret of the Business.

At a dinner in Washington Dr. Harvey W. Wiley, the government's food expert, said as the coffee was served: "What delicious filtered coffee. This is not like some coffee I have seen. And now I am reminded of an incident that happened in my native Kent. A Kent boy, a grocer's son, was undergoing an oral examination. 'Tell me, please,' said the examiner, 'where coffee comes from?' The boy blushed and hung his head, 'I ain't allowed to tell that, sir,' he faltered, 'it's a secret of the business.' "

The total trade of the Philippine Islands last year was: Imports, $30,452,810; exports, $33,097,867.

HE'S WILLING TO WAIT.

They once believed the world was set
And that the sun was always moving—
A theory that few would dare
To think just then about disproving.
They thought the planets made of
And wrote no end of books about it
Which common folk would much admire
It wasn't very wise to doubt it.

Old Galen and Hippocrates
Told us a lot about our bodies,
And ages since have paid their fees
To dull disciples of these noddies,
They bled and blistered long ago
From scarlet fever to the scurvy,
And happily they did not know
We'd turn their science topsy-turvy.

They wasted years and years to learn
How metals base might be transmuted
And all their theories in turn
Have been successfully refuted.
If I lost time in such a way
I know that I should be quite rattled
That's why small knowledge I display—
I'm waiting till they get things settled.
—Chicago News.

"Waiter, one of these oysters is bad." "Well, sir, you'll see I've given you two extra."—The Tatler.

Guest—"I want to send a message upstairs." Clerk—"Have to wait, madame, till 'Front's' back."—Baltimore American.

"Grandfather," began Jimmy, as he gazed thoughtfully at the aged man's shining head, "why don't you tell yourself a hair-raising story?"—Judge.

"Now, Pat, would you sooner lose your money or your life?" "Why, me loife, yer reverence; I want me money for me old age."—Philadelphia Inquirer.

"What is meant by naturalization?" "Naturalization is the process by means of which an evicted Irish tenant becomes an American policeman."—Cleveland Leader.

"Have you ever loved and lost?" sighed the swain. "Nope," responded the maiden, promptly. "I've won every breach of promise suit I ever brought."—Cleveland Leader.

"What's all that cannonading?" "They are firing the salute of the States—forty-six guns." "Wow! Did you hear that? The gun must have blown up!" "No, that's for Oklahoma."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"I spent some of my salary today. I think even a married man has the right to do so." "There's a great deal to be said on that subject." "Well, I guess my wife will be equal to saying it all."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

"Yes," remarked the race horse, "all my achievements have been due simply to putting my best foot forward." "Yes?" replied the mule. "Now I find that I accomplish most by putting my best foot backward."—Philadelphia Press.

The McSkinner—"'Twa shillin' to gang to Holborn! Nay, nay. But-weel—I'll toss ye, double or quits." Sporting Cabby—"Well—I'm goin' that way any'ow—so 'ere goes. 'Eads!" The McSkinner—"Heads! Weel, ye've won. So I'll jist hae to walk!"—Punch.

Convalescing victim of auto accident—"I woke up and found the hot Welsh rabbit. I recognized it as my wife's cooking, but it was better seasoned than the average." Nurse—"Merciful saints! we couldn't imagine what had become of that other mustard plaster."—Judge.

Theatrical Manager—"So you think you can stand the arduous duties of a variety actor? You know in this play we find occasion to throw you down a thirty-foot flight of stairs into a barrel of rain water." Hungry Applicant—"Oh, I guess I can stand that, all right. I was a tax collector for three years."—Chicago Daily.

Mr. Cad—"Can I see that burglar who was arrested for breaking into my house last night?" Inspector (hesitatingly)—"Well, I don't know. What do you want to see him for?" Mr. Cad—"Oh, there's nothing secret about it. I just wanted to find out how he managed to get into the house without waking my wife."—Illustrated Bits.

A Mistaken Situation.

A rather elderly gentleman stepped on a Fifth avenue car in Pittsburg about eleven o'clock the other night and after giving the conductor explicit directions to wake him when the car reached Federal street seated himself in a corner and was soon sound asleep. When he had ridden about half a dozen blocks beyond Federal street a sudden lurch of the car wakened him.

Rubbing his eyes he looked out of the window and seeing where he was angrily accosted the conductor thus: "Conductor, why didn't you wake me up as I told you? Here I am half a mile past my house."

"I did try, sir," responded the conductor, "but all I could get you to say was, 'All right, Mary, get the children their breakfast and I'll be down in a minute.'"—Brooklyn Life.